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Senator Gavin Marshall
Chair - References Committee
Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment
Parliament House
Canberra, ACT 2600

Dear Senator Marshall,

The Australian Chamber wishes to provide a brief response to the Senate Inquiry into the appropriateness and effectiveness of the objectives, design, implementation and evaluation of Jobactive.

The effectiveness of Government funded employment services is a very important issue for business. Over the years, we have engaged with Government and stakeholders to identify ways that the system can be improved to provide better job outcomes through better and increased employer engagement.

In that context, the Australian Chamber is currently devoting significant resources to the employment services reform process guided by the Employment Services Advisory Panel, chaired by Sandra McPhee, which is supported by the Department of Jobs and Small Business. The Australian Chamber was invited to sit on the Employment Services Advisory Panel by the former Minister for Jobs, Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash, to provide advice from an employer perspective on the design of future employment services. We are actively engaged in the reform process and are working with the various stakeholders towards constructing a more responsive employment services system.

Whilst we recognise that Jobactive has a range of issues including with employer engagement, two inquiries running concurrently is unlikely to get the focus it deserves from the various stakeholders. As part of the independent review process, the Department of Jobs and Small Business has conducted numerous stakeholder consultations and roundtables over the course of the year and a report will be provided to the Minister for Jobs, Industrial Relations and Women, the Hon Kelly O'Dwyer MP, in October.

We believe any engagement by Parliament through the Senate Committee will be more usefully conducted once this process has concluded. We would be happy to make a more detailed contribution at that time.

Yours sincerely,

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Director – Employment, Education and Training

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